

answer was, “No, we’re equal. We’re equal partners on the war on terror. We’re equal partners working for a world that’s more free.”

And today in my speech to the Parliament, I will praise Australia’s work in this part of the world. I’ll note the fact that Australia led in East Timor. And Australia’s—Australia is carrying a heavy load, for which we are grateful. And I appreciate you, Mr. Prime Minister.

I said Mr. Prime Minister—somebody told me that they made fun of me for calling—or they made fun of the Prime Minister, when they call him “the man of steel.” I’m going to repeat the words. That’s a high compliment. That means in the face of criticism, he’s staying strong, that he does what he think is right. And the world is better for the leader—leaders like Prime Minister John Howard.

Prime Minister Howard. You asked me, did the President put in correct and proper Texan—we were in Crawford. And so the language of sheriff and deputy sort of rolls easily off any tongue, particularly an American tongue.

Look, our role in the region is—I’ve categorized it as that of *helpem fren*. That is—for the benefit of the Americans, that is pidgin English used by the Pacific Islanders. It means helping a friend. And I see Australia’s role in the region as helping friends. And that’s what we’re doing in the Solomons. It’s what we did in East Timor. It’s what we may have to do again in other parts of that region. But when necessity arises, we help people. We don’t see ourselves as having any kind of enforcement role, but we’re always good to our allies, particularly the United States, to defend values that are important to both our societies.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. at the Australian Parliament House. In his remarks, he referred to Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida’s chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A reporter referred to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Australian Parliament in Canberra October 23, 2003

President Bush. Governor-General Michael Jeffery, Prime Minister John Howard, Speaker of the House, Leader of the Senate, Leader of the Opposition Simon Crean, distinguished Members of the House and the Senate, Premiers, members of the diplomatic corps, ladies and gentlemen: Laura and I are honored to be in the Commonwealth of Australia. I want to thank the Prime Minister for his invitation. I want to thank the Members and Senators for convening this session of the Parliament. I want to thank the people of Australia for a gracious welcome.

Five months ago, your Prime Minister was a distinguished visitor of ours in Crawford, Texas, at our ranch. You might remember that I called him a “man of steel.” [*Laughter*] That’s Texan for “fair dinkum.” [*Laughter*] Prime Minister John Howard is a leader of exceptional courage who exemplifies the finest qualities of one of the world’s great democracies. I’m proud to call him friend.

Americans know Australia as a land of independent and enterprising and good-hearted people. We see something familiar here, something we like. Australians are

fair-minded and tolerant and easygoing. Yet in times of trouble and danger, Australians are the first to step forward, to accept the hard duties, and to fight bravely until the fighting is done.

In a hundred years of experience, American soldiers have come to know the courage and good fellowship of the “diggers” at their side. We fought together in the Battle of Hamel, together in the Coral Sea, together in New Guinea, on the Korean Peninsula, in Vietnam. And in the war on terror, once again we’re at each other’s side.

In this war, the Australia and American people have witnessed the methods of the enemy. We saw the scope of their hatred on September the 11, 2001. We saw the depth of their cruelty on October the 12, 2002. We saw destruction and grief, and we saw our duty. As free nations in peril, we must fight this enemy with all our strength.

No country can live peacefully in a world that the terrorists would make for us. And no people are immune from the sudden violence that can come to an office building or an airplane or a nightclub or a city bus. Your nation and mine have known the shock and felt the sorrow and laid the dead to rest. And we refuse to live our lives at the mercy of murderers.

The nature of the terrorist threat defines the strategy we are using to fight it. These committed killers will not be stopped by negotiations. They will not respond to reason. The terrorists cannot be appeased. They must be found. They must be fought, and they must be defeated.

The terrorists hide and strike within free societies, so we’re draining their funds, disrupting their plans, finding their leaders. The skilled work of Thai and Indonesia and other authorities in capturing the terrorist Hambali—suspected of planning the murders in Bali and other attacks—was a model of the determined campaign we are waging.

The terrorists seek safe harbor to plot and to train, so we’re holding the allies

of terror to account. America, Australia, and other nations acted in Afghanistan to destroy the home base of Al Qaida and rid that country of a terror regime. And the Afghan people, especially Afghan women, do not miss the bullying and the beatings and the public executions at the hands of the Taliban.

The terrorists hope to gain chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, the means to match their hatred. So we’re confronting outlaw regimes that aid terrorists, that pursue weapons of mass destruction, and that defy the demands of the world. America, Australia, and other nations acted in Iraq to remove a grave and gathering danger, instead of wishing and waiting while tragedy drew closer.

Since the liberation of Iraq, we have discovered Saddam’s clandestine network of biological laboratories, the design work on prohibited long-range missiles, his elaborate campaign to hide illegal weapons programs. Saddam Hussein spent years frustrating U.N. inspectors for a simple reason: because he was violating U.N. demands. And in the end, rather than surrender his programs and abandon his lies, he chose defiance and his own undoing.

Who can possibly think that the world would be better off with Saddam Hussein still in power? Surely not the dissidents who would be in his prisons or end up in his mass graves. Surely not the men and women who would fill Saddam’s torture chambers and rape rooms. Surely not the families of the victims he murdered with poison gas. Surely not anyone who cares about human rights and democracy and stability in the Middle East. Today, Saddam’s regime is gone, and no one—

[At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.]

Speaker Andrew. Senator Brown, I warn you—Senator Brown will excuse himself from the House. Senator Brown will excuse himself from the House. The Sergeant will remove Senator Brown from the House.

The President.

President Bush. Surely no one who cares about human rights and democracy and stability in the Middle East. Today, Saddam Hussein's regime is gone, and no one should mourn its passing.

In the months leading up to our action in Iraq, Australia and America went to the United Nations. We are committed to multilateral institutions, because global threats require a global response. We're committed to collective security, and collective security requires more than solemn discussions and sternly worded pronouncements. It requires collective will. If the resolutions of the world are to be more than ink on paper, they must be enforced. If the institutions of the world are to be more than debating societies, they must eventually act. If the world promises serious consequences for the defiance of the lawless, then serious consequences must follow.

Because we enforced Resolution 1441 and used force in Iraq as a last resort, there is one more free nation in the world, and all free nations are more secure.

We accepted our obligations with open eyes, mindful of the sacrifices that had been made and those to come. The burdens fall most heavily on the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families. The world has seen the bravery and skill of the Australian military. Your Special Operations forces were among the first units on the ground in Iraq. And in Afghanistan, the first casualty among America's allies was Australian, Special Air Service Sergeant Andrew Russell. This afternoon, I will lay a wreath at the Australian War Memorial in memory of Sergeant Russell and the long line of Australians who have died in the service to this nation. And my Nation honors their service to the cause of freedom, to the cause we share.

Members and Senators, with decisive victories behind us, we have decisive days ahead. We cannot let up on our offensive against terror, even a bit. And we must continue to build stability and peace in the

Middle East and Asia as the alternatives to hatred and fear.

We seek the rise of freedom and self-government in Afghanistan and in Iraq for the benefit of their people, as an example to their neighbors and for the security of the world. America and Australia are helping the people of both those nations to defend themselves, to build the institutions of law and democracy, and to establish the beginnings of free enterprise.

These are difficult tasks in civil societies wrecked by years of tyranny. And it should surprise no one that the remnants and advocates of tyranny should fight liberty's advance. The advance of liberty will not be halted. The terrorists and the Taliban and Saddam holdouts are desperately trying to stop our progress. They will fail. The people of Afghanistan and Iraq measure progress every day. They are losing the habits of fear, and they are gaining the habits of freedom.

Some are skeptical about the prospects for democracy in the Middle East and wonder if its culture can support free institutions. In fact, freedom has always had its skeptics. Some doubted that Japan and other Asian countries could ever adopt the ways of self-government. The same doubts have been heard at various times about Germans and Africans. At the time of the Magna Carta, the English were not considered the most promising recruits for democracy. [*Laughter*] And to be honest, sophisticated observers had serious reservations about the scruffy travelers who founded our two countries. [*Laughter*] Every milestone of liberty was considered impossible before it was achieved. In our time, we must decide our own belief: Either freedom is the privilege of an elite few, or it is the right and capacity of all humanity.

By serving our ideals, we also serve our interests. If the Middle East remains a place of anger and hopelessness and incitement, this world will tend toward division and chaos and violence. Only the spread

of freedom and hope in the Middle East in the long term will bring peace to that region and beyond. And the liberation of more than 50 million Iraqis and Afghans from tyranny is progress to be proud of.

Our nations must also confront the immediate threat of proliferation. We cannot allow the growing ties of trade and the forces of globalization to be used for the secret transport of lethal materials. So our two countries are joining together in the Proliferation Security Initiative. We're preparing to search planes and ships and trains and trucks carrying suspect cargo to seize weapons or missile shipments that raise proliferation concerns. Last month, Australia hosted the first maritime interdiction exercise in the Coral Sea.

Australia and the United States are also keeping pressure on Iran to conform to its letter and spirit of the nonproliferation obligations. We're working together to convince North Korea that the continued pursuit of nuclear weapons will bring only further isolation. The wrong weapons, the wrong technology in the wrong hands, has never been so great a danger, and we are meeting that danger together.

Our nations have a special responsibility throughout the Pacific to help keep the peace, to ensure the free movement of people and capital and information, and advance the ideals of democracy and freedom. America will continue to maintain a forward presence in Asia, continue to work closely with Australia.

Today, America and Australia are working with Japan and the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore and other nations to expand trade and to fight terror, to keep the peace in the Taiwan Straits.

Your country is hosting President Hu Jintao. Australia's agenda with China is the same as my country's. We're encouraged by China's cooperation in the war on terror. We're working with China to ensure the Korean Peninsula is free of nuclear weapons. We see a China that is stable and prosperous, a nation that respects the peace

of its neighbors and works to secure the freedom of its own people.

Security in the Asia-Pacific region will always depend on the willingness of nations to take responsibility for their neighborhood, as Australia is doing. Your service and your sacrifice helped to establish a new Government and a new nation in East Timor. And working with New Zealand and other Pacific Island states, you're helping the Solomon Islands reestablish order and build a just Government. By your principled actions, Australia is leading the way to peace in Southeast Asia. And America is grateful.

Together——

[There was a disturbance in the audience.]

President Bush. Together, my country, with Australia, is promoting greater economic opportunity. Our nations are now working to complete a U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement that will add momentum to the free trade throughout the Asian-Pacific region, while producing jobs in our own countries.

[There was a disturbance in the audience.]

Speaker Andrew. Senator Nettle will resume her seat. Sergeant, remove Senator Nettle. Senator Nettle will resume her seat. The President has the call. Senator Nettle is warned. Sergeant will remove Senator Nettle.

President Bush. I love free speech.
[Laughter]

Speaker Andrew. The President has the call.

President Bush. The relationship between America and Australia is vibrant and vital. Together, we will meet the challenges and the perils of our own time. In the desperate hours of another time, when the Philippines were on the verge of falling and your country faced the prospect of invasion, General Douglas MacArthur addressed Members of the Australian Parliament. He spoke of a code that unites our two nations, the code of free people, which, he said,

“embraces the things that are right and condemns the things that are wrong.”

More than 60 years later, that code still guides us. We call evil by its name and stand for freedom that leads to peace. Our alliance is strong. We value, more than ever, the unbroken friendship between the Australian and the American peoples. My country is grateful to you and to all the Australian people for your clear vision and for your strength of heart. And I thank you for your hospitality. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. at the Australian Parliament House. In his remarks, he referred to Governor-General Michael Jeffery, Prime Minister John Howard, Speaker of the House of Representatives Neil Andrew, President of the Senate Paul Calvert, and Leader of the Opposition Simon Crean of Australia; Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin (known as Hambali), Al Qaida’s chief operational planner in Southeast Asia; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Hu Jintao of China. Speaker Andrew referred to Senators Bob Brown and Kerry Nettle of Australia.

Statement on Senate Action To Block a Vote on Class Action Reform Legislation

October 23, 2003

Yesterday, 39 Members of the U.S. Senate blocked an up-or-down vote on a bill that would reduce frivolous lawsuits and the burden they place on our economy. The “Class Action Fairness Act” would protect the legal rights of all citizens while ensuring that court awards and settlements go to those who are wrongfully injured rather than to a few wealthy trial lawyers. Class action reform will allow businesses and their employees to go back to the business

of growing our economy and creating jobs. It was passed by the House and is favored by a large bipartisan majority in the Senate. Those who are serious about bringing an end to frivolous lawsuits in this Nation and protecting the rights of those who are wrongfully injured should strongly support this legislation. I am eager to sign it; our economy needs it; and I urge those Senators who stand in the way to let the will of the people be heard.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Honolulu, Hawaii

October 23, 2003

Thank you all very much. Aloha! Thank you. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. If I seem a little jet-lagged—*[laughter]*—it’s because I’ve spent a long week away from home. After 8 days on the road and more than 18,000 miles in the air, it’s great to be back in America. And it’s really great to be in the beautiful State of Hawaii.

We had a great trip. I visited with some of our strongest allies in the war on terror and some of the Nation’s most important trading partners. We made progress on a broad agenda, an agenda that will help make America more secure and more prosperous.

I want to thank each of you for giving me a warm welcome home. I particularly